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BACKGROUND ON CURRENT STATUS OF US-RWANDAN RELATIONS

RELEASED IN FULL

SHARED GOALS

-- The US and the Government of Rwanda share the same objectives of peace and reconciliation for Rwanda.

-- Nevertheless, many challenges remain: creating a sense of security in and outside Rwanda, creating conditions that will favor refugee return, ensuring accountability for the genocide and other atrocities, establishing a political dialogue, and assuring representative government.

US ASSISTANCE TO RWANDA

-- The US is committed to assisting Rwanda with each of these challenges.

--We are working to help pay off Rwandan Government Government arrearages to the World Bank. Through an informal "Friends of Rwanda" group consisting of European donor nations which the U.S. has organized, we are encouraging and coordinating other donor assistance.

--In addition to working through multilateral institutions and with other donors, we are planning how to most expeditiously implement a bilateral development assistance package of \$9 million. This package is intended to help in the refurbishing of key ministries, including equipment, technical services and rebuilding of basic infrastructure.

--This development assistance builds on the rehabilitation assistance we have already begun in Rwanda and which we plan to continue.

-- While this has been geared to meeting such basic human needs as food, water and shelter, as more people leave displaced and refugee camps, it will be oriented to helping them redevelop their communities.

--We also recognize the need to re-establish the Rwandan domestic judicial system and are helping with that, as well.

NEXT STEPS FOR THE GOR

-- The US role in helping Rwanda meet its many challenges is limited; the principal burden falls, of course, on the Government of Rwanda.

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-- The next steps that we see as critical to bringing Rwanda closer to more lasting peace and reconciliation are:

- o Creating a climate of security and respect for the rule of law within Rwanda. This includes finding effective mechanisms to resolve property disputes and maintaining discipline among Rwandan government troops.

- o Instilling throughout all elements of the government the fundamental principle of civilian control of the military. Kigame is in a unique position to see that this message is heard and followed.

- o Fashioning with the UN and relief agencies a coherent plan for the voluntary return of displaced people. Renewed violence associated with the closure of displaced persons camps would negatively affect reconciliation efforts and international community support.

- o Demonstrating Rwanda's commitment to the Arusha principles by beginning a dialog with moderates within and outside the country and by absorbing acceptable members of the Ex-Rwanda Armed Forces troops into the army.

AREAS OF COOPERATION

-- As we work together to overcome Rwanda's challenges, we must also deal with the very real problem of continuing violence and intimidation in the refugee camps outside of Rwanda.

-- We agree that some action must be taken and are discussing the issue at length with the UN and the Rwanda operational support group. We hope to have an agreed UN strategy very soon.

-- We urge continued cooperation with Rwanda's neighbors and seek the strong support of the GOR in convening a regional refugee conference to address camp security and other issues.

-- We are also committed to ensuring that those responsible for the genocide are brought to justice and welcome the Rwandan Government's intention to cooperate with the International Tribunal.